

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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P R 181311Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY 1506

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY SANAA

COMIDEASTFOR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T MANAMA 0746 FINAL SECTION OF TWO EXDIS
REMAIN. THEY NOTED THIS REFLECTS LONG-STANDING GOODWILL TOWARD
U.S., AND AS EVIDENCE BAHRAINI LEADERSHIP TAKES PRIDE IN ITS
FRIENDSHIP WITH U.S. GOVERNMENT AND DESIRES EVEN CLOSER
RELATIONSHIP. PRIME MINISTER SAID THERE ARE CERTAIN "DETAILS"
TO BE WORKED OUT IN ARRANGING CONTINUED MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE
BUT THAT THESE SHOULD POSE NO PROBLEM IN CONTEXT OVERALL GOOD
RELATIONS. BAHRAINIS ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT CONTINUED PRESENCE
U.S. NAVY INEVITABLY SUBJECTS BAHRAINI LEADERSHIP TO QUESTIONS
BY BAHRAINI PUBLIC AND FRIENDLY ARAB STATES AND ATTACKS BY LESS
FRIENDLY ONES SINCE FACT THAT MIDDLE EAST FORCE STATIONED IN
BAHRAIN IMPLIES GOB HAS A RELATIONSHIP WITH USG WHICH NO OTHER
ARAB COUNTRY HAS.

8. "SPECIAL" US-BAHRAINI RELATIONSHIP. PRIME MINISTER ADDED THAT
GOB HAS "GUTS" ENOUGH TO STAND UP TO CRITICISM OF MIDDLE EAST
FORCE PRESENCE IN BAHRAIN BUT NEEDS EVIDENCE OF US SUPPORT
TO COMBAT SUCH CRITICISM. GOB MUST BE ABLE TO SHOW ITS OWN
PEOPLE AND FRIENDLY NEIGHBORS THAT IN HAVING SPECIAL RELATION-
SHIP WITH US, MANIFEST IN PART BY MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE,
IT HAS SOME ADDITIONAL SIGNIFICANT MANIFESTATION OF US
COOPERATION. THIS COOPERATION SHOULD FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENT OF
CIVILIAN ECONOMY. LONG-STANDING COOPERATION BETWEEN US PRIVATE
BUSINESS AND BAHRAIN IS MOST WELCOME AND GOB WOULD BE GRATEFUL
FOR USG EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE, AS A MATTER OF POLICY, INCREASED

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PRESENCE OF AMERICAN PRIVATE BUSINESS IN BAHRAIN. OF PARTICULAR

AND URGENT IMPORTANCE, HOWEVER, IS NEED FOR SOME TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF OFFICIAL US ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND SUPPORT. GOB HAS COME TO CONCLUSION THAT USG TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, THROUGH PROVIDING A NUMBER OF EXPERT AMERICAN ADVISERS ON CONCESSIONAL TERMS, WOULD BE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY USG COULD ASSIST BAHRAIN IN HANDLING POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF CONTINUE U.S. NAVY PRESENCE, WHILE SERVING AT SAME TIME MUTUAL US-BAHRAINI INTEREST IN STRENGTHENING SOCIAL-ECONOMIC FABRIC IN BAHRAIN, AND HENCE IN GULF GENERALLY. MR. SOBER EXPLAINED IN SOME DETAIL STRONG USG INTEREST IN PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY AND EXPERT ADVICE TO BAHRAIN AND OTHER STATES IN REGION, NOTING PRESENT STATUTORY AND BUDGETARY RESTRAINTS ON PROVIDING SUCH HELP ON OTHER THAN STRICTLY REIMBURSABLE BASIS. HE ASSURED AMIR AND PRIME MINISTER USG CONTINUING TO LOOK AT THIS PROBLEM URGENTLY AND WOULD LOSE NO OPPORTUNITY TO BE OF HELP WHERE POSSIBLE. BAHRAINIS INDICATED AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION OF USG GOOD FAITH IN THIS REGARD BUT STRESSED URGENCY OF THEIR NEED FOR SIGNIFICANT TOKEN OF USG SUPPORT FOR BAHRAIN DEVELOPMENT, REITERATING THEIR CONVICTION THAT BAHRAIN ALREADY AND INEVITABLY HAS A "SPECIAL" RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S., AND WISHES TO SEE IT GROW.

9. COMMENT. I CONSIDER MR. SOBER'S VISIT ESPECIALLY BENEFICIAL IN INDICATING TO BAHRAINI LEADERSHIP U.S. INTEREST IN BAHRAIN AND GULF REGION GENERALLY AND IN PROVIDING REASSURANCES RE U.S. POLICY IN MIDDLE EAST AND GULF. BOTH MR. SOBER AND I WERE STRUCK BY INTENSITY AND OPENNESS WITH WHICH THE AMIR AND PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED THEIR DESIRE FOR STABILITY THROUGHTOUT GULF AREA WITH U.S. EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTING SAUDI AND IRANIAN ROLES WHILE INTENSIFYING DIRECT RELATIONSHIPS WITH SMALLER GULF STATES. BAHRAINI PERCEPTION OF GULF AND OUR ROLE IN IT IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR OWN POLICY OBJECTIVES. AMIR AND PRIME MINISTER ARE OBVIOUSLY SINCERE IN THEIR DESIRE TO SEE U.S. NAVY PRESENCE CONTINUE IN GULF, ACCOMMODATED IN BAHRAIN. AT SAME TIME THEY ARE UNDERSTANDABLY SENSITIVE TO BEING EXPOSED, BOTH AT HOME AND IN REST OF ARAB WORLD, TO CRITICISM FOR MAINTAINING ONLY U.S. MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT ON ARAB SOIL. HENCE THEY FEEL STRONG AND URGENT NEED FOR EVIDENCE OF "SPECIAL" RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S. IN WHICH VISIBILITY OF MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE WILL BE OFFSET BY SOME U.S. SUPPORT FOR ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT OF BAHRAIN'S ECONOMY. VARIOUS INDICATIONS OF GROWING US-BAHRAINI COOPERATION

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ARE WELCOME, INCLUDING CONTINUED USG ENCOURAGEMENT TO AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO CONSIDER OPPORTUNITIES IN BAHRAIN. ESSENTIALLY, HOWEVER, GOB HAS CONCLUDED THAT PRESENCE OF SMALL NUMBER U.S. CIVILIAN EXPERT ADVISERS IN BAHRAIN, PROVIDED BY USG UNDER CONCESSIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, WOULD BEST EVIDENCE EVOLVING US-BAHRAINI RELATIONSHIP IN WHICH CONTINUED NAVY PRESENCE MIGHT BE MORE EASILY JUSTIFIED TO PUBLIC OPINION. GOB LEADERSHIP ALSO SEES U.S. TECHNICAL ADVISORY HELP AS DESIRABLE FOR ITS OWN SAKE,

SERVING MUTUAL U.S.-BAHRAINI INTEREST IN ORDERLY PROGRESS IN BAHRAIN
AND GULF REGION GENERALLY. ONE CANNOT ESCAPE CONCLUSION THAT
BAHRAINI REQUEST IS URGENT AND BASED ON SOUND READING NOT ONLY
OF BAHRAINI INTEREST BUT OF OUR OWN INTEREST, BOTH POLITICAL
AND COMMERCIAL.

10. DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS DOD FOR ISA, SECNAV, CNO, CINCUSNAVEUR.
TWINAM

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED.

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